

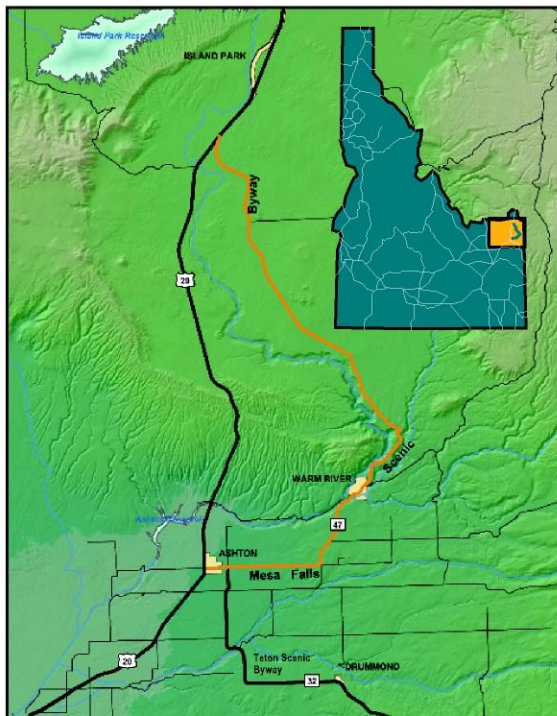


## Mesa Falls Scenic Byway

The Mesa Falls Scenic Byway begins at the junction of U.S. 20 and Idaho 47, near the northern terminus of the Teton Scenic Byway in Ashton, Idaho. From Ashton, the route travels through the Warm River area towards its main attractions, Upper and Lower Mesa Falls.

At 114 feet and 65 feet respectively, the Upper and Lower Falls offer equally spectacular views in a beautiful forest setting. Both falls can be viewed in full, Lower Falls from a quarter mile distance, Upper Falls from just a few feet away. The area near Upper Falls is enhanced with pathways, stairs and viewing platforms. These improvements lead visitors to the brink of the falls, close enough to feel the power of the cascading water. Some of the pathways and viewing platforms are universally accessible. The historic Big Falls Inn (fee site) at Upper Falls has been restored to its original splendor and it is now open seasonally (approximately May 15<sup>th</sup> thru October 1<sup>st</sup>) as an interpretive center.

Though the byway is less than an hour's driving time, viewing the falls, touring the interpretive center, enjoying a picnic lunch and making stops to view wildflowers can easily fill half a day.



**Location** - The southern end is in Ashton at Idaho 47, travel northeast 12.4 miles to the old Bear Gulch Ski Area site, then northwest along Forest Service Route 294 to the northern end at U.S. 20.

**Length** - 28.7 miles. Allow 1 hour.

**Roadway** - Both Idaho 47 and Forest Service Route 294 are two-lane, paved roads. Forest Service Route 294 is closed in winter and becomes a Forest Service snowmobile route.

**When to see it** - Spring through fall is great by car. In the winter the Forest Service road becomes one of many snowmobile trails in the area. If you have a snowmobile or cross-country skis, winter is the time to go; if you don't, there is no access.

**Special attractions** - Upper Mesa Falls; Lower Mesa Falls; Harriman State Park on U.S. 20; many trails for bikes, horses, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiles.

**Camping** - The Warm River Forest Service Campground is approximately 9 miles east of Ashton on the Warm River. The Grand View Forest Service Campground is located at the Lower Mesa Falls turnout.

**Services** - Full services in Ashton and Island Park.

**Contacts** - Ashton/Island Park Ranger District: 208-652-7442; Ashton Chamber of Commerce: 208-652-3987; Ashton Visitor Center: 208-652-7520; Targhee National Forest: [www.fs.fed.us/tnfmefalls/welcome.htm](http://www.fs.fed.us/tnfmefalls/welcome.htm).